

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders." —Matthew 27:3

The world's churches are fast-becoming infiltrated with "Doctrines of Devils" as the Bible warns in **1st Timothy 4:1**, "**Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.**" Notice carefully that these false prophets "shall depart from the faith," or we can just as well say that they will begin teaching a false plan of salvation that requires more or less than faith. The Bible has always taught that good ole FAITH is what pleases God, and nothing else.

Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

So to start this article with a solid doctrinal foundation, let us establish that IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD WITHOUT FAITH. Salvation is solely by faith. **Galatians 3:26, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."** Anything more or less than faith is not acceptable to God. Optimism (a positive outlook) is not faith. It falls short of being faith. Teaching that some degree of personal works is necessary to validate one's faith to be saved is a works-based plan of salvation. It is certainly not faith. Faith means to entrust the Savior, period.

Now Judas had a relationship with Jesus Christ, but still went to Hell forever. A "relationship" is not the gospel. I get tired of hearing radio preachers telling people to start a relationship with Jesus Christ. That is not God's plan of salvation. We read in Matthew 27:3 (our text verse

above) that Judas "repented himself." The Greek word for "repented" here is *metamellomai* and means "to care afterwards, that is, regret."

Judas was sorry that he got caught betraying the Lord. Judas felt embarrassed and lonely, having betrayed the best friend a man could ever have. Judas felt sorry for what he had done. However, feeling sorry is not repentance unto salvation. The Bible says that Judas repented, but then he went and commit suicide. But Judas had NO FAITH. In John 6:70 Jesus said that Judas had a devil in him.

There are a lot of false preachers today; such as, John MacArthur, Ray Comfort, Chip Ingram, Pat Roberson, Paul Crouch, Paul Washer, Jon Piper and William Lane Craig who pervert the Gospel, teaching that mere faith alone by itself is insufficient to save a sinner. That is a deadly teaching. They all teach their own version of the same corrupted *Lordship Salvation* lie that requires some amount of works to validate one's faith TO BE SAVED. That is, they mandate forsaking sinful bad habits and departing from the heathen world in order to be saved. These are heresies! You don't have to give up the act of sin to be saved; but rather, God gave up His only begotten Son for you and me, to pay for OUR SINS. Salvation is receiving, not giving. It is a free gift! It's not what you're doing that gets you to Heaven, it's where you're looking!

LOOK TO JESUS!

Faith is receiving the Lord's death, burial and resurrection as full-payment for our sins. Judas felt sorrow and tried to return the money.

Judas tried to turn over a new leaf, changing his wicked ways and making amends, but it was not possible. This is false repentance. This is the false plan of salvation that the Lordship Salvation crowd teaches. They demand that a person feel sorry and decide to turn over a new leaf or else they cannot trust Christ. It is a false way of salvation.

Likewise, neither you nor I can make amends for our past sins, nor can we undo the damage of our bad decisions and sins from the past. The very idea that we need to stop sinning as much as we used to in order to be saved is an insult to God. In effect, the Lordship Salvation crowd demands a changed life as a prerequisite to placing faith in Jesus Christ. Such blasphemy goes against everything the Bible teaches for salvation.

Biblical repentance is the admission that I am as guilty a sinner as God has declared me to be in His holy Word. Repentance is a *change of mind*. The purpose of God's law is to diagnose man's problem (which is sin), and then point us to the blessed Savior for the solution to our

problem. **Galatians 3:24, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."**

There Can Be No Reformation Until There Has Been Regeneration

The evil concept behind Lordship Salvation is that faith is not valid unless there is an accompanying desire to stop living a life of sin. Thus, Lordship Salvation requires qualification by reformation before there can be any regeneration. This is a false plan of salvation which leads to Hell.

This is exactly what [Pastor Aiden Tozer](#) taught. Mr. Tozer errantly states:

"In the Bible the offer of pardon on the part of God is conditioned upon intention to reform on the part of man. There can be no spiritual regeneration till there has been a moral reformation" (The Best of A.W. Tozer, Book 2, pg. 115-117; Compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe).

Wrong! How then is salvation a free gift? Salvation is receiving, NOT giving. Mr. Tozer requires sinners to "reform" themselves before they can be saved. This goes totally contrary to the plainest teaching in the Bible. Romans 4:5 states: *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* Mr. Tozer is teaching works salvation!!! Salvation is a free gift, freely given and freely received. Where in the Gospel message does the Bible teach that "intent to reform" is necessary for salvation? It does not!

What the Bible does teach is found in **2nd Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."**

Hence, the change can only come AFTER a man is IN CHRIST. So,

Biblically, there can be no reformation until there has first been regeneration. That is, "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN" (John 3:5-7). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit (i.e., the Spirit of Christ, Romans 8:9) is what changes a man. Therefore, it is a false doctrine to require any reformation, or intent to reform, as a prerequisite to being born-again.

All that God requires is for a person to "**Repent ye, and believe the gospel**" (**Mark 1:15**). It does not say, "repent ye, and stop living in sin." Nor does it say to "Reform ye, and believe the gospel." To teach that repentance means "intent to reform" is false repentance. The Greek word for "repent" in Mark 1:15 is *metanoeo* and means "a change of mind." Thus, Biblical repentance is acknowledging one's SINNERSHIP! It does not mean ceasing from one's sins, forsaking the sinful world nor having intention to cease from committing sins.

The popular allegation by proponents of Lordship Salvation is that the easy-believism crowd thinks a person can get saved and continue living in gross immorality unchecked by God. I DO believe that if a person experiences genuine repentance unto salvation that there WILL BE some inner changes in that person's life. This is clearly taught by 2nd Corinthians 5:17. Albeit, those spiritual changes may not manifest themselves outwardly to your satisfaction. As Pastor Curtis Hutson often said, "You cannot tell how much fuel is in a car's tank by the sound of the horn." Salvation is immediate, but sanctification is a lifetime process. Dr. Jack Hyles does an excellent job explaining this subject in his work, [SALVATION IS MORE THAN BEING SAVED](#). I love what John Bunyan (1928-1988) said:

"If you do not put a difference between justification wrought by the man Christ without and sanctification wrought by the Spirit of Christ within, you are not able to divide the Word aright; but contrariwise, you corrupt the Word of God, and cast stumbling blocks before the people." —John Bunyan

A changed life is the FRUIT of the indwelling Holy Spirit, if we walk in Him, and not a part of the ROOT of saving faith. Fruit has nothing to do with salvation, neither before, during or after getting born-again. We must never associate fruit with salvation. **Galatians 5:25, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."** I love this Bible verse, because it clearly shows that living in the Spirit (indwelt with the Holy Spirit at salvation) is not the same thing as walking in the Spirit (which is discipleship). As Christians we "**should**" live soberly, righteously and godly in Christ Jesus. **Titus 2:11-12, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;"** Every believer

SHOULD live for Jesus, which the Apostle Paul said in Romans 12:1-2 is our **“resonable service.”**

By only reading the Old Testament, we'd never know that Lot was saved.

But we learn in 2nd Peter 2:7 that Lot was a **“just”** (righteous) man.

Judges 16:1 says that Samson went in unto a harlot (prostitute). King

David murdered a woman's husband to cover up an unintended pregnancy from an adulterous affair. We know that David repented from what the Scriptures tell us, but the people in David's time didn't know that. I'm sure many of them considered David a reprobate concerning the faith. Apart from the direct testimony of a person's mouth, there is no way to determine whether they are saved or not.

Jesus Is Our Sabbath In Whom We Rest

Notice that the Bible teaches in the following Scripture passage that **“DEAD WORKS”** cannot save. **Hebrews 6:1, “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.”** That's salvation, that is, repenting from our dead works and placing our faith in Jesus Christ! Whereas working 6-days of the week pictured man's own self-righteousness under the Old Testament Mosaic law, the Sabbath Day pictured Christ IN WHOM WE REST FOR SALVATION.

Today, [Jesus is our Sabbath!](#) The Sabbath Day was an Old Testament ceremonial law which was finally nailed to the cross with Christ (Colossians 2:14-17). Thus, the Sabbath Day is no longer in effect today for Gentiles or Jews. JESUS IS OUR SABBATH!!! In Christ we rest completely for salvation. **Hebrews 4:10, “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”** That's good stuff my friend!

Repent Ye, And “Believe The Gospel”

Judas' repentance was a “false repentance” because it led him to Hell.

Turning over a new leaf is not repentance or salvation. Judas turned away from his sins, but still went to Hell. The correct Biblical word for “repent” concerning salvation is found in **Mark 1:15, “And saying, The**

time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: REPENT ye, and believe the gospel."

The word "repent" here is the Greek word *metanoeo* and means, "a change of mind." There is a drastic difference in meaning between the repentance which Judas experienced in Matthew 27:3, versus the repentance unto salvation in Mark 1:15. Notice that the OBJECT of repentance in Mark 1:15 is to "BELIEVE THE GOSPEL." The Bible doesn't say "Repent ye, and forsake your sins"; but rather, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Judas felt emotional guilt and remorse for his actions, which is *penitence*, not repentance. That penitence led Judas to want to make a mend for his sins, which is why Judas returned the thirty pieces of silver.

But this is *penance*, not repentance. Judas penitence and penance led him to *reform* his ways, turning from his sins. This is false repentance, aka, Lordship Salvation. Judas felt guilty and decided to return the 30 pieces of silver. Judas tried to change his ways, but that is not salvation.

Matthew 27:3 says that Judas "**repented himself**," but this is a different Greek word (*metamellomaiin*, meaning, "to regret") than *metanoia* ("a change of mind" unto the Gospel itself) used concerning salvation. Judas turned from his sins, which is human *reformation*, not Biblical repentance (which is "a change of mind" unto the Gospel itself).

John 6:47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." To "believe" the Gospel simply means that you are taking God at His Word, that you are persuaded Jesus died on the cross for your sins, He was buried, and He resurrected from the dead three days later! You either believe or you don't! I do and I hope you do too my friend.

The Lordship Salvation crowd today foolishly teach that people MUST feel sorry and remorseful concerning their sins, to the point that they cease from committing sinful bad habits and surrender their life to live for Jesus Christ. That's exactly what Judas did. This is a false gospel rooted in man's own self-righteous effort. It's a self-righteous philosophy that corrupts the Gospel. In sharp contrast, the correct meaning of "repent" (as concerns salvation), simply means that a person acknowledges the truth that they are a guilty sinner (Romans 3:19), which shows them their need for redemption and points them to believe on the Savior to be saved (Galatians 3:24-25).

If you simply think about the nature of a gift, then it becomes clear what is wrong with the teaching of Lordship Salvation. If I offer you a free gift

on the basis that you must first agree to stop throwing snowballs at my house, then it is in fact a reward instead of a gift. A gift is something acquired WITHOUT compensation. This is why we read in **Romans 4:5**, "But to him that **worketh not**, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness.**" The Bible says that salvation is to him that WORKETH NOT!!! A person's faith is COUNTED for a lifetime of perfect righteousness! No one can enter into Heaven unless they are 100% perfect. Since we are all imperfect needy sinners, no one can be saved by keeping the deeds of the law (Romans 3:20). But with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26; John 1:12-13)! Jesus did live a perfect life. The Lord never broke God's law. Jesus is sinless. Jesus is the perfect Lamb of God, Who was slain on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. **John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."** Jesus died as our sacrificial Lamb on the cross, and He raised up as our heavenly High Priest three days later (Hebrews 4:14-16). Believe it oh sinner and you will be saved immediately, irrevocably and eternally!

Pastor Harry Ironside Has Repentance Correct!

[Pastor Harry A. Ironside](#) (1876-1951) DIDN'T teach *Lordship Salvation*, he simply taught that Biblical repentance was necessary for salvation. Listen to what Pastor Harry Ironside correctly says about repentance in [chapter 16](#) of his book, [EXCEPT YE REPENT](#) . . .

"In all that I have written I have failed completely to express what was surging up in my soul if I have given anyone the impression that I think of repentance as something meritorious which must be produced in man by self-effort ere he is fit to come to God for salvation."

SOURCE: Dr. Harry Ironside, a quote from chapter 16, [THE PREACHING THAT PRODUCES REPENTANCE](#), from his timeless classic book, [EXCEPT YE REPENT](#).

I agree 100%! The entire concept of *Lordship Salvation* is based in human effort. Most of our evangelical churches today have bought into the lie that it's not enough to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be

saved. The Gospel is that Jesus Christ DIED, was BURIED and RESURRECTED from the dead three days later (1st Corinthians 15:1-4).

If you receive Christ's sacrifice on the cross as full payment for your sins, then you are saved. But don't I have to repent? Yes, of course! Biblical repentance is "a change of mind" that causes a person to believe the Gospel. Repentance is NOT a desire to stop sinning. Repentance is realizing that you are a SINNER and need the Savior, and so you believe the Gospel and are saved. Repentance is *changing your mind* about whatever was previously hindering you from completely resting in Christ for salvation.

Clearly, Ironside taught a Free Grace view of the Gospel. Consider further the following quote by Pastor Ironside...

"The Gospel is not a call to repentance, or to amendment of our ways, to make restitution for past sins, or to promise to do better in the future. These things are proper in their place, but they do not constitute the Gospel; for the Gospel is not good advice to be obeyed, it is good news to be believed. Do not make the mistake then of thinking that the Gospel is a call to duty or a call to reformation, a call to better your condition, to behave yourself in a more perfect way than you have been doing in the past ...

Nor is the Gospel a demand that you give up the world, that you give up your sins, that you break off bad habits, and try to cultivate good ones. You may do all these things, and yet never believe the Gospel and consequently never be saved at all."

SOURCE: Harry A. Ironside, from the sermon: [What Is The Gospel?](#)

If you'd like to read further, please read [ANOTHER GOSPEL?](#)

Look back to our beginning verse in Matthew 27:3. It says that Judas repented and then went back to the chief priests and the elders to return the money. They refused and dealt harshly with him. Judas

panicked and emotions overwhelmed him. Judas killed himself. There's criminals in this world who can kill someone in cold blood and not feel one bit of guilt or remorse. Evidently, Judas wasn't a cold-hearted criminal since he did feel guilt, but he failed to seek forgiveness in Christ. Apart from the name of Jesus there can be no salvation (Acts 4:10-12).

Jesus, knowing that Judas was a known thief (John 12:6), chose Judas to be an Apostle in accordance with God's sovereign will. Never underestimate the will of God in your life. Sometimes things may seem all wrong, forever in shambles and hopeless, but God truly does work in mysterious ways. In hindsight we see the purpose of Judas being made an Apostle in God's plan, but at the time the other Apostles probably wondered why Jesus chose such a shady man to join their group. I mean, would you put a known thief in charge of your group's money bag? Jesus made Judas their treasurer, knowing that Judas loved money, was unsaved and according to John 6:70 had a devil in him. God works in mysterious ways!

Judas didn't believe on Christ and had never learned the sweetness of God's love and forgiveness. Peter knew of these things. Sadly, Judas is in Hell today, but Peter is in Heaven. When asked by the Lord Whom He was, Peter exclaimed, "THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD"!!! Amen and amen!!! **Matthew 16:16, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."** Judas never expressed such faith in the Lord, because he had none.

May I quote the words of Harry A. Ironside...

"Repentance is the very opposite of meritorious experience. It is the confession that one is utterly without merit, and if he is ever saved at all it can only be through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'who gave himself a ransom for all.' Here is firm footing for the soul who realizes that all self-effort is but sinking

sand. Christ alone is the Rock of our salvation."

SOURCE: Harry A. Ironside; Except Ye Repent, pg. 36)

Clearly, Ironside taught a Free Grace view of the Gospel. Dr. Ironside correctly recognized repentance as the confession that "one is utterly without merit" and that if one is "ever saved at all it can only be through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ." Salvation is without works of self-righteousness. Romans 4:5 plainly teaches that a man's faith is COUNTED for righteousness, i.e., the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to one's heavenly record by faith.

"Repentance is the recognition of my sinnership – the owning before God that I am as vile as He has declared me to be in His holy Word."

SOURCE: Except Ye Repent, by Dr. Harry Ironside, chapter 3.

Here is one of the best quotes that I've found on repentance, by Dr. Harry A. Ironside:

"Which comes first, repentance or faith? In Scripture we read, 'Repent ye, and believe the gospel.' Yet we find true believers exhorted to 'repent, and do the first works.' So intimately are the two related that you cannot have one without the other. The man who believes God repents; the repentant soul puts his trust in the Lord when the Gospel is revealed to him. Theologians may wrangle over this, but the fact is, no man repents until the Holy Spirit produces repentance in his soul through the truth. No man believes the Gospel and rests in it for his own salvation until he has judged himself as a needy sinner before God. And this is repentance." (Except Ye Repent, p. 16)

Also, Dr. Hal Lindsey has repentance Biblically correct, who states:

"Repentance, as it relates to Christ, means to change our minds about Him, who He is and what He's done to provide forgiveness, and deliverance from our sins. When we place faith in Jesus as having taken our place personally on the cross and borne the penalty due our

sins, then we're automatically repenting, because we couldn't accept Him in this way without having to change or minds in some way concerning Him." (From the Liberation of the Planet Earth, by Hal Lindsey. (p. 133).

Good Works Cannot Undo A Person's Bad Works

Judas had experienced false repentance. He felt guilt and tried to undo the evil he had done. Judas thought this would make the guilt go away. It made it worse. The cold-hearted Pharisees didn't care. They even tried to shift all the blame on Judas, but they were equally as guilty. The Pharisees were cold-hearted criminals. Judas was actually doing what most people are still doing today, that is, trying to do good works to undo the bad. Many religions teach this nonsense. Listen friend, you can't do good works to make up for the bad. If you steal something from someone and then bring it back, you still sinned. Jesus died on the cross for that sin. Judas sinned and should have went to God for forgiveness, but instead he tried to do perform some good works. Good works will NEVER make things right between your soul and God!

The unbiblical idea that faith must be validated before a person can have the assurance of their salvation is satanic. Faith is faith, you either have it or you don't. There is no dividing line between intellectual assent to the philosophy of Christianity verses actually trusting upon the Savior.

You either believe or you don't.

Dr. Chip Ingram errantly teaches that a person is not saved until they believe "TO THE POINT" (those are his own words) that they turn away from a past life in sin...

"But now the ball's in your court. If you would like Jesus as your Savior. Saving faith is getting in the wheelbarrow. Trusting in His work on the cross, His payment for your sin, His resurrection TO THE POINT that you say, I turn away and repent from my past life in sin, I change my mind and I trust, I get in the wheel-barrow." [emphasis added]

SOURCE: [Dr. Chip Ingram, sermon quote, "Fatal Assumption: Exposing The Myths Of Being Born Again - Part Two"](#)

My friend, there are no conditions of salvation. Pastor Charles H. Spurgeon said it correctly...

"'Repentance' is a grace. Some people preach it as a condition of salvation. Condition of nonsense!" —Pastor Charles Spurgeon

SOURCE: <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0044.htm> (Charles Spurgeon, from a sermon titled, *REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE*, preached at the *New Park Street Chapel*, Southwark, on Sept. 23, 1855)

Pastor Spurgeon did make some heretical statements at times in his thousands of sermons, which the proponents of Lordship Salvation cherry-pick to support their damnable heresy. But Spurgeon got it 100% correct in the preceding statement! He is not saying that repentance is not necessary for salvation. What Spurgeon is saying is that repentance is NOT A WORK. It is a grace, that is, **"For BY GRACE are ye saved through faith..." (Ephesians 2:8)**. Grace is God's mercy, kindness and gentleness toward sinful mankind, offering redemption through faith in Jesus Christ. Eternal life is a free gift! Those who teach repentance as a condition (work) for salvation have woefully corrupted the Gospel.

Repentance is simply acknowledging THE TRUTH that you are a guilty sinner. **2nd Timothy 2:25, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"** As you can see, repentance is not turning from sins, it is acknowledging THE TRUTH that you are a needy sinner. And then we are saved by placing our confidence (trust) in THE TRUTH of the Gospel, being persuaded that Jesus is the Christ Who died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and bodily resurrected the third day. **Colossians 1:5, "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;"** We don't repent AND believe, we repent TO believe! We are not saved by repenting, we are saved by believing, but no man has ever believed who didn't also repent.

Repentance is not a separate act from believing, it simply facilitates believing, because we need to know what we are being saved from, our sins. Jesus didn't come so that we would turn from our sins to be saved,

but to save us from our sins! **Matthew 1:21, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."** You don't have to stop living in sin to be saved; but rather, Jesus died for your sins so that hopefully you wouldn't live that way anymore. **2nd Timothy 2:19, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."** A redeemed child of God SHOULD live for Jesus, because we were created unto good works, not by them. **Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** Please notice again the words "**we should**" walk in them. God bless you dear reader and thank you.

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